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Polit. Pamphlets A vol 75

LETTER

FROM A

Foreign Minister

IN

ENGLAND,

TO

Monsieur PETTECUM.

CONTAINING

The True Reasons of the late Changes in the Ministry, and of the Calling a New Parliament: And therefore fit to be perus'd by all the Electors.

Translated from the French Original.

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by J. R. Pol. Pamphlets V2 page 139
see Catal. of Noble Authors - probably a mistake



S I R,

I Find by your Letter of the 8th Instant, that the Deputies of the States-General for Foreign and secret Affairs, had held several Consultations about the present Posture of Affairs in *England*; and that upon their Report, their High Mightinesses seem'd inclin'd to send hither Monsieur *Buys*, Pensioner of *Amsterdam*, Ambassador Extraordinary to the Queen of *Great-Britain*, to take care of the Interest of your Republick. You desire me, at the same time, to give you such Lights into the *true State of Things* here, as may serve towards Mr. *Buys's* Instructions, in case that Embassy should be fully resolv'd upon: Which I shall do the more readily, because my Master being himself embark'd in the Grand Confederacy, of which *England* is the main Pillar, it is our Common Interest to watch the Measures of this Court, that we may regulate ours by 'em.

I must in the first place freely tell you, that I was somewhat surpriz'd, when I heard that so wise a Body as the States, could seem alarm'd at her *Britannick* Majesty's Design to make some Alterations in Her *Ministry*, and to call a *New Parliament*. But I was perfectly amaz'd, when I was inform'd that they had interpos'd in favour of the old Ministers: A Thing which they

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never

never took upon them to do, even in the late King *William's* Reign, when their High Mightinesses might reasonably be suppos'd to have a greater share in the Councils of the *British* Court. However, I will not pass a harder Censure upon this Step, than her *Britannick* Majesty Herself, who has only look'd upon it, either as the Effect of a *mistaken Zeal* for the Common Cause, or the *Crafty Suggestion* of the Friends and Emissaries of the late Lord T ———. For having set all Engines at work, in this Country, to keep him in his *Place*, and *Power*, and found them uneffectual, they at last endeavour'd to persuade some of the Allies, that the PUBLICK CREDIT of *England* depended upon him ; so that the whole Confederacy seem'd to be concern'd in his *Preservation*.

This I take to be the most favourable Construction that can possibly be put on the *Interposition* of their High Mightinesses; but lest any *false Suggestions*, or Representations of Things here, should lead that wise Assembly into any other impolitick Measures, I shall discover to you the TRUE REASONS and *Motives* of the late *Alterations* in this Court.

I must in the first place, rectify the Confus'd and false Notion, which is generally entertain'd Abroad, and even by many here, of the Different Parties in this Nation. You comprehend all in *Holland* under the Common Appellations of TORIES and WHIGGS, who indeed are the most Numerous, and most Powerful ; but, besides these Two Parties, there are Two others, of less Consideration, *viz.* the JACOBITES and the REPUBLICANS.

Tho'

Tho' it be far more Difficult to *define* in *Politics*, than in *Metaphysicks*, I shall endeavour to give you a right Idea of these *Four Parties*; which if my Observations, for these One and Twenty Years past, deceive me not, is as follows.

I. First the *Tories* are those who firmly adhere to the Monarchical Government, under its legal Limitations and Restrictions, and to the Doctrine and Ceremonies of the Church of *England*, and who, upon old Grudges and Animosities, look on the *Dissenters* as their declar'd Enemies.

II. The Party of the *Whiggs*, or *Low-Churchmen*, is made up of such Church-men, as have a Brotherly Tendernefs for the *Dissenters*; and of the *Dissenters* themselves: And both these are also for *Monarchy*, tho' perhaps in a more restrain'd Sense than the other.

III. The *Jacobites* consist of some Members of the Church of *England*, and of all the *Roman Catholics* of the Kingdom, the first of whom upon a Principle of *Conscience*; the others of *Duty*, *Inclination* and *Interest*, did constantly adhere to the late King *James*, and as far as in them lay, promoted his *Restauration*, as they now do that of the *Pretender*. This Party is of itself hardly considerable enough to be mention'd, or taken notice of, but that on all publick Occasions they intrude themselves upon, and mix with the *High-Churchmen*; who, tho' they differ in Principle, and are firmly zealous for the *Protestant Succession*, yet in *Elections* do not scruple to accept their Votes; the rather, because their Competitors, the *Whiggs*, do also fortify themselves by the *Fourth Party*, viz.

IV. The *Republicans*, or *Common-wealth's-men* This Party, a Spawn of the old *Oliverians*, or *Cromwellists*, consists of a few *Presbyterians*, and all the *Independants* of this Nation, who would make no manner of Figure by themselves, but that they joyn themselves with the true *Whiggs*: Tho' with as small Encouragement from them, as the *Jacobites* receive from the *High-Church-Men*; and as little *Conformity* to their Political Principles.

From these INTRUSIONS it comes topass, that upon any *Contentions* and *Disputes* that arise between the Two Great Parties of this Nation, the *Tories* and *Whiggs*, they mutually asperse one another with the odious *Appellations* of the *Minor Party*, which sometimes lurks amongst them; so that the *Tories* call the *Whiggs* *Republicans*, and the *Whiggs* call the *Tories* *Jacobites*.

But, Sir, you must observe, that these Distinctions of *Tory* and *Whigg* do properly belong to the *Second Class*, or *Inferior Rank* of Men: For Persons of the first Rank, who either by their *Birth*, or *Abilities*, are entitled to govern others, do not really list themselves in these Parties, but only put themselves at the Heads of either of them, as they judge it most subservient to their Private Ends and Designs; which being premis'd, it will not be difficult to trace up the late *Alterations* in this Country, to their true *Causes*.

The Nobility and Gentry of this Free Nation, bearing with Indignation and Impatience the exorbitant Power invaded by the D. of M— and the late *Lord Treasurer*, whose Families engross'd the most profitable Places, and accumulated vast Riches to themselves, whilst the Generality groan'd under the Weight of heavy Taxes;

Taxes ; and who absolutely dispos'd of all Civil and Military Employments, with visible Partiality to their Dependants ; a Design was laid to *remove* the one, and by that means *restrain* the *Authority* of the other. In order to that, some distant Attempts were made in the House of Commons towards an Inquiry into the Management of the Treasury ; for which the apparent **NEGLECT** of the War in *Spain*, and the immense Debt of the Navy, gave but too just a Pretence. But the Lord Treasurer having secur'd a great Party among the *Whiggs*, who made up the Majority of that House, that Enquiry which was press'd by the *Tories*, was overrul'd and laid aside.

However, the Lord Treasurer, still apprehensive of being call'd to an Account the last Winter, dextrously laid hold of a favourable Opportunity to divert the Attention of the Parliament, by causing a *Hot-headed* Divine to be Impeach'd, and Prosecuted with all the Solemnity and Formality of Parliamentary Tryals, for a *Sermon*, which both Parties agreed to be a *Piece of Nonsense*, and the Result of an *Extravagant* and *Ignorant Zeal* : But which contain'd a *Crime*, in the Opinion of the Lord Treasurer's Friends, *unpardonable* : For it bitterly inveigh'd against his *Male-Administration*, Characterizing him by his Nickname of **VOLPONE**.

But, Sir, mark the *Folly* of Humane *Wisdom* ! This very Tryal of Dr. *Sacheverell*, which was principally contriv'd for the Lord Treasurer's *Preservation*, has prov'd the main Handle of his Destruction. For the Queen having been present at this solemn Tryal, and taking Notice, that the *Whiggs*, who manag'd this Prosecution,

advanc'd some Political Positions that invaded the Royal Prerogative, which the *Tories*, who defended him, asserted with great Loyalty and Zeal, Her Majesty was thereby Naturally inclin'd to entertain better Thoughts of the latter.

On the other hand, an insolent great Lady, who had long entirely possess'd the Queen's Favour, being intoxicated with Power, and not behaving herself with that *grateful* and *respectful* Carriage to her *Mistress* and *Benefactress*, which such high Obligations and her Duty exacted from her, the Queen began to be reserv'd with her, and to take into her Royal Confidence another Lady, a near Relation of the Dutchess of *Marlborough*.

The Credit of the latter, and of all the *Whigg-Party*, whom she protected, declined considerably last Winter, upon a Contention about the Disposal of the late Earl of *Essex's* Regiment of Dragoons, which Her Majesty would have bestow'd on Colonel *Hill*, Brother to the growing Favourite, as a just Reward for his Eminent Service at the Battle of *Almanza*, where he was very Instrumental to the preserving the broken Remains of the Infantry. This was oppos'd by those then in Power about the Queen, who insisting on Her Prerogative, the *Struggle* went so far, that a Design was laid by one of the Dutchess's Sons-in-law in a great Post, to procure a Vote of the House of Commons for the Removal of Mrs. *M——*. This intended Violence was timely prevented, by the Colonel's throwing himself at Her Majesty's Feet; and begging she would be pleas'd to bestow that Post upon another Officer, which Her Majesty granted: But justly resenting this,

this, and other Indignities that had been offer'd Her; and at the same time, a Gentleman of great Parts, Probity, and Address, having the Opportunity of acquainting Her Majesty with the General Discontent, at the exorbitant Power and Greatness of one Family, and at the Management of Affairs, in Relation to some part of the War, and the Navy, Her Majesty resolv'd to make some Changes in Her Ministry, and thereupon began with the Person who had propos'd the Removing of Mrs. M——. The Lord Treasurer was the next: Nor can Mr. H——y be blam'd for having contributed to the Fall of a Person, who, after he had been Saved by Mr. H——ly, from an Impeachment (on account of the *Act of Security* pass'd in *Scotland*) by an uncommon Piece of Ingratitude, bore him an inveterate Hatred; and not satisfy'd with having removed him from the *Secretary's Office*, used afterwards all imaginable, and indeed Scandalous Methods to destroy him. The Lord Treasurer's Fall was attended by the Removal of several other Persons, whose Places are supplied by Men of Equal Merit, and no less Zealous to advance the Interest of their Country, than to promote the Good of the *Common Cause*: And I am confident, That if the Court of *France* broke the late Conferences at *Gertruydenberg*, upon a Prospect of the turn of Affairs in this Country, in favour of the *Pretender*, they will be as miserably disappointed in that fond Expectation, as they have been in many others of the like Kind on this side the Water, and perhaps pay very *Dear* for their Mistake: For in all probability, this *New Ministry* will insist upon better Terms for *All* the *Allies*, than the Old would have been contented with.

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The Treasury in particular, which is both the *Nerve* of the *War*, and the *Spring* of PUBLICK CREDIT, is now in the Hands of Five Persons no less conspicuous for their *Abilities*, than for their *Integrity*; and whose great Estates in Land is a *Security* to the Nation for their Clear and Just Administration. That you and your Friends in *Holland*, may form a true Notion of them, I shall give you a short Sketch of their Characters.

In the first Place the Earl of POWLET is a Noble-man of Polite Literature, Publick Spirit, clear and unspotted Reputation, Virtuous and Exemplary Life, Moderate Temper, and in possession of an Estate of above Twelve Thousand Pounds *per Annum*.

Mr. *Harley* is already so well known by the great Parts he has acted, both in the last and the present Reign, that it may seem needless to mention his Character. However, he having been foully misrepresented by his Enemies, I must acquaint you that he is a Gentleman of wonderful Natural and acquired Abilities; Universal Learning; wonderful Address, Penetration, and Indefatigableness; and who of all Men, is best acquainted with the Constitution of this Kingdom, and the Methods of Proceeding in Parliament. As for his Principles, in relation to the Parties that divide this Nation, I know not that he ever entirely embrac'd any; but still went into such Measures as he thought most conducing to the *True Interest* of his Country, of which I shall give you these few Instances. In the first Place, he sided with the High-Church Party, when they oppos'd the Bill of Attainder against Sir *John Fenwick*, being perswaded they had most *Moderation* who least pretended to it. On the other Hand, after the *Assassination Plot* he

he was one of the most forward to Sign in the House of Commons, the ASSOCIATION in favour of King *William*; which shews he is intirely in the *Revolution Principles*. In the third Place, he brought into the House of Commons, the Bill for TRIENNIAL PARLIAMENTS; which is a stronger *Bulwark* of the *British Liberties*, than the *Habeas Corpus Act*. And Lastly, he signaliz'd his first entrance into the Secretaries Office, by preventing an Insurrection that was ready to break out in *Scotland* in favour of the *Pretender*; which demonstrates his Affection to the *Protestant Succession*.

Sir *Thomas Mansel*, who was formerly Comptroller to Her Majesty's Household, is a Gentleman of a very Ancient Family; most ample Fortune; Generous Temper; Publick Spirit; and clear Understanding: Truly zealous for the Establish'd Church, without any Bitterness towards the Dissenters.

Mr. *Paget*, Son to the Lord *Paget*, sufficiently known Abroad by his Embassies, is a Gentleman whose bright Parts and Spirit have often been admir'd in the House of Commons, and who is perfectly well acquainted with the Business of the Navy, having been one of the Council to his late Royal Highness Prince *George*.

In the last Place, Mr. *Benson* is a Gentleman of quick and bright Parts, improved by Study, Travel, and Polite Conversation; well vers'd in the Laws of this Kingdom, and Parliamentary Proceedings; which has gain'd him a great Interest in his Native County of *York*, and in the House of Commons.

These Sir, are the five Gentlemen who now have the Administration of the Queen's Treasury;
and

and the Event has already justify'd Her Majesty's Choice: For, tho' they found the Exchequer entirely exhausted of Mony, and notwithstanding the Clandestine Endeavours of the *Discarded Ministers*, to sink the Publick Funds, by means of their Agents in the City of *London*, these New Commissioners of the Treasury have engaged a Company of the most Substantial Merchants, to remit Five hundred thousand Pounds for the Armies in *Flanders*, *Italy*, and *Spain*, at a cheaper Rate than the late Treasurer ever did: A happy Presage that the PUBLICK CREDIT cannot but Prosper as long as they continue in that Post.

Moreover, this their first care of supplying the Armies Abroad, notwithstanding the Difficulties they labour'd under, upon their entrance into their Office, is a plain demonstration, that if after the late great Successes in *Spain*, (which by the by, seem to be a *Providential Blessing* attending the Changes here) the Common Enemy do not think it their Interest, once more to beg for Peace, the War will, on this side, be prosecuted with more Vigour than ever; and with an *Impartial Attention*, from these New Ministers, to all the Parts of it. And, indeed, Her *Britannick Majesty* having already declar'd to Us, That whatever Changes she made among Her Ministers, she would still continue the Duke of *Marlborough* in his Command, 'tis not to be doubted that if his Grace acts the Part of a True Heroe, and Sacrifices his *Private Disgusts* to the *Publick Good*, he will find the *New Ministers* as ready to promote his Honour and Advantage, as the Old. Therefore, it will be his own Fault, if he does not make as great a Figure Abroad as he did before; which shews at the same time, that any Applications in his

his Favour from the Allies to this Court, would be altogether preposterous and needless.

I cannot at present give you a positive Account of the other *Alterations*, because they are not yet declar'd; But will adventure to assure you, that the Nobility and Gentry who have before sided with the *High-Church Party*, will certainly be Preferr'd; and that upon a double Consideration. In the first Place, Because the late Lord Treasurer's Creatures and Dependants being *Whiggs*, it were Unpolitick to put others of the same Principles in their Places, because they might strike into any Measures to procure his Restoration. Secondly, Because the *High-Church Party* being for the most part Landed Gentlemen, who for many Years, have born the chief Burden of the War, it is but a piece of Paternal Justice in Her *Britannick Majesty*, to give them an Opportunity of repairing their Fortunes. I shall only tell you, that I am credibly inform'd, that the Earl of *Rochester* will be made President of the Council: And indeed, who has a better Title to preside at that Board, than a Person no less Distinguish'd by his near Relation to the Queen, than by his Wisdom, Capacity, Penetration, Integrity, and firm Adherence to the Protestant Interest; which last he demonstrated in the most difficult Times; having rather chosen to resign the Treasury, than yield to the late King *James's* Sollicitations to turn Papist. I hear likewise, that the Duke of *Ormond* is to be made Lord Lieutenant of *Ireland*; and if so, 'twill rather be a *Restoration*, than a *Preferment*, that truly Noble, Generous, and Publick Spirited Person, having highly merited that Government by his past Services, both in the last and present War, to the vast detriment of his own Patrimony.

These,

These, Sir, are the true and Genuine Motives and Causes of the Changes in this Court: And you may assure your self, that any other Reasons that may be assign'd for them, either by *Licentious and Ignorant Scriblers*, with which this Nation swarms, or the Friends and Emissaries of the late Ministry, who have their Hirelings even in your Country, are all ill-grounded and false Suggestions, purposely set on Foot to asperse and blacken her *Britannick* Majesty, and her present Counsellors, with wild and extravagant Designs of bringing in the *Pretender*: As if out a *Gaiety*, a Sovereign in the Vigour of her Age, and securely establish'd in the Hearts and Affections of her Subjects, would throw up her Crown; And Men of *Estates* and *Protestants*, set up Arbitrary Government and Popery.

I own, the *Violent Tryal* of Dr. *Sacheverell* on the one Hand, and the *Insults* put on the *Parliamentary Authority* on the other, have caus'd a great Ferment in the Nation, the Hot Men of both Parties laying hold on this Occasion to vent their Spleen and Malice against each other: But as those who began this unlucky and Unpolitick Procedure, are only accountable for the fatal Consequences of it; so I can affirm to you, that the prevailing Party at Court, have made no other use of these Distractions than to bring their *Scheme* to bear, by striking in with the general Desire of the High-Church Party; who in their Addresses, far more numerous than those of the *Whiggs*, have insinuated the Dissolution of the last Parliament; a *New* one being absolutely necessary, not only to support the *present Ministry*, but also to enquire into the *Administration* of the last.

It is impossible to tell you for certain how the ensuing Elections will go : But considering the Influence of the Court, and the Interest of Men in Power, besides some other Circumstances hinted at before, it is very probable that the *High-Church-Men* will have the Majority in the House of Commons : And indeed, as they begun the War, so it seems reasonable that they should have the Honour of ending it. In such a Case all Things will go on with all the smoothness imaginable ; And as upon the Death of the late King *William*, 'twas they that made good the *Deficiencies* of that Reign, there's no doubt but they will be now as tender of the Honor of **PARLIAMENTARY ENGAGEMENTS**. Let the Parliament be what it will, I am inform'd from good Hands, that the Queen in her first Speech will recommend to them, 1. The better securing, if possible, the **PROTESTANT SUCCESSION**. 2. The supporting the **PUBLICK CREDIT**. And 3. The maintaining the **TOLERATION** : And that the present Ministers will use their utmost Endeavours to have Her Majesty's Desires effectually comply'd with.

I heartily wish, that this short Account I have here given you of the true *Political State* of this Court and Nation, at this Critical Juncture, may be of some use to our Friend the *Grand Pen—ry*, and contribute towards the maintaining a fair Correspondence among the Maritime Powers, who are the main Support of the Grand Confederacy.

London, Sept.
15. 1710.

I am, &c.

F I N I S.

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